

PAM.
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The Cathedral of Mexico City, Built by the Indians During the Virreinal Period. Gardens Recently Rebuilt by the Constitucionalista Government

A Minister of the Catholic Cult Signs the Act of his Civil Marriage in Order to Redress the Wrong which he Caused to an Unhappy Young Lady, a Student in the Normal School of this City (Zacatecas, Mex.)



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A MINISTER OF THE CATHOLIC CULT SIGNS THE ACT OF HIS CIVIL MARRIAGE IN ORDER TO REDRESS THE WRONG WHICH HE CAUSED TO AN UNHAPPY YOUNG LADY, A STUDENT IN THE NORMAL SCHOOL OF THIS CITY. (Zacatecas, Mex.)

From "La Voz del Obrero", Aug. 15, 1916.

(Similar cases, and the fact that the Catholic Church is in possession of land against the law, produce a hatred among the Mexican people for the Clerical Party, *not toward the religion*, but toward the Party as a political power and its demoralized priesthood. The following case is very similar to the lynch law in the South of the United States.—Mérida, Yuc.)

This scandalous deed is rapidly spreading throughout social circles.

Zacatecas, July 20th, 1916.

To the Director of "*La Voz del Obrero*", Mérida, Yucatán.

Dear Sir:

With this letter I enclose a clipping of the daily "*La Voz de Zacatecas*", published in this City, dated to-day, and in which is narrated in detail, with a number of genuine documents which prove the truth of the statement—the crime of which Father Agustín Mújica y Trejo is guilty.

The far-reaching effects of the step taken by this Government in order to comply with the principles and impulses of the Revolution, as well as the singularity of the event to which I refer—for, to-date, there has never been a case where a minister of the Church would bend his insolent pride under the weight of the Law—are sufficient motives, in my opinion, to deserve the reproduction of this statement throughout the press of the republic, and even abroad. In view of the above, I request that with any modifications you

may deem necessary, this story be reproduced in your newspaper.

Thanking you in advance, I remain,

Yours very truly,

General C. PLANK.

An act, without precedent in the annals of the revolution, has taken place in this city, awakening the interest of even the most indifferent, and has thrown the reactionary camp into confusion.

This is a victory won by the Constitutionalist Justice, a glimmer of the Revolutionary ideal which greatly dims the evangelical virtues which the Ministers of the Church claim to possess, and which is an eloquent proof of the reasons assisting our present rulers, when they carry out in practice the regenerating principles which moved them to participate in the struggle which had for an object the exposing of national vices and the extirpating from society, not the religious beliefs, but the fatal errors which weigh down those educated in the corrupting atmosphere of fanaticism.

LET US SPEAK CLEARLY:

We know that when speaking openly of a matter which touches the good name of the Church, and which, in the judgment of Catholics should be dealt with in the shadow of the Confessional, we will be called irreverent and heretical; we will be under the ban (inoffensive forus) of excommunication; we will be accused of being impudic, and an effort will be made to confound us with those writers who attack clericalism merely to satisfy their anti-clerical feelings. We do not care. We are not going to misrepresent facts with the ridiculous euphemisms which were the fashion in the times of our grandparents, in order to comply with the old formulæ of an inadequate pulchritude of language so as not to wound the delicate ears of certain parties.

We know well that despite the fact that our words bear the seal of irrefutable truth, that despite the evidence of documents which we exhibit as proof of the veracity of our accusation, the believers, in the darkness of their brains, will consider as an innocent victim the malefactor who shields himself with the pretended inviolability of the ecclesiastical dignity and will blame as arbitrary the public functionaries.

Such is the devastation operating in the minds of fanatics, who suppose the existence of divine qualities in the human servants of a religious cult; and who, just because they have the tonsure, are not deprived of the human attributes with which Nature has endowed them.

A REPUGNANT CRIME.

We will tell it at once: The event which we are going to narrate is a crime, a repugnant crime, bred in the soul of a depraved Franciscan monk who, covering himself with the sheep skin, introduced himself into an honest home to destroy its happiness.

The pen of an Eza de Queiros—with its terribly ironical impiety—could, no doubt, with vibrant style, with the admirable coloring of a bright painting, fill the pages of a book where the doings of this worthy successor of Father Amaro were perpetuated for the shame of the apostles of oscurantism.

On our part, we shall merely state the facts, so as not to astound our readers; since these delinquencies are a daily occurrence; but in order to justify the proceedings employed in this case by the revolutionary government and to point out the danger that threatens all those who in the future may endeavor to soil the honor of families, without adding that, for the peace of mind of women, the time is over when we were ruled by odious dictatorships, which looked complaisantly over the misdeed of these Don Juanes in cassock, because they needed the help of the clergy in order to secure the success of their government plans.

THE STORY OF EVENTS:

Under date of the 21st instant, Miss Puelles, Principal Director of the Normal School for Teachers (women) of this City, sent the following communication to the Government of the State:

“I respectfully submit to that Superior Office the expedient composed of the acts taken with reference to the contemplated expulsion of Miss Caritina Serros, a student in this institution, belonging to the second preparatory year, so that the Supreme Government decree what should be done in the case,” etc.

The documents which, according to the preceeding one,

were formed in regard to the expulsion of Miss Serros, are three, and the first one, after the usual requisites, reads as follows:

"In the City of Zacatecas, on the fourth day of the month of July, nineteen hundred and sixteen, before the members of the Board of Administration of this Institution, the Principal stated the following: There are many unfavorable versions relative to the behavior outside of this building, of one of the students; these rumors have become known among the school children and, even among strangers and, taking into account the moral harm which may result to the other students, as well as for the decorum of the school itself, and as misbehavior is one of the misdemeanors which the Law of Secondary Instruction considers sufficient to justify expulsion, the Principal presents these facts to the consideration of the Board, for the corresponding decision."

A NOTORIOUS INJUSTICE:

The two other acts contain, more or less, a repetition of the motives expressed by the Principal, but it should be observed that at none of the meetings of the Board were offered the proofs necessary to justify a measure which directly affected the future of a student. On the contrary, these meetings confined themselves to discussion of the advisability of taking a decisive step in the matter which had acquired notoriety; that the data obtained was vague and general, and lastly, the Board did not have enough civil courage to call things by their names and demand that the authorities punish the culprit, although Miss Puelles, the Principal, gave them information absolutely private which she had received in her character as a Principal; instead, becoming the accomplice of an abominable crime, the Board kept silent as was convenient for saving the culprit, and let fall all the rigor of the by-laws, on the person, perhaps irresponsible, of a child of fifteen years, despoiled of her most valuable treasure.

NO MORE PASS WORDS.

Thus it happened during the Diaz rule. Nobody is ignorant that during that period, the thread broke where it was thinner; but the Board of Directors of the school to

which we refer forgot that between that period and the present one, there are six years of constant sacrifices, six years of heavy trials, of painful suffering and that the Mother country bleeds and her sons die willingly in order to prevent the repetition of the infamies of the oppressors.

The Governor, in view of those ambiguous documents, ordered a detailed investigation in order to get at the truth. This was soon found out and to the general indignation of the sane members of society, it was learned that a certain Agustín Mújica y Trejo, a friar of the Franciscan Order, had wronged Miss Caritina Serros. But this is not all. There is still more.

CLERICAL INTRIGUE AND JUSTICE LABOR OF THE GOVERNMENT.

Judging from the investigation made, the crime was committed in the City of Sombrerete, where the above mentioned Trejo had charge of the parish. For some unknown reason, it is believed that the criminal friar and the poor child had some disagreement which severed their love relations.

The man, not satisfied with the wrong he had already done, tried to harm Miss Serros still further and came over to this City in pursuit of his victim who was attending the Normal School of Teachers with the aim of securing a future by means of study, and he then started an intrigue in order to get the Principal of the school to expel the girl from the school. His machinations were fruitful, thanks to the leniency of the Board of Directors and the timidity of the Principal.

This is evidenced by the act of the investigation carried out on the night of Saturday, 22nd, at the home of the Principal of said Normal School for Teachers, which reads as follows:

"In the City of Zacatecas, capital of the State of same name, on the 22nd day of July, 1916, at 10 o'clock in the evening, and by order of the Supreme Government of the State, the officers of the Jefatura de Armas (Military Commandery?) called at the house, No. 15, in the Street of Gallos, residence of Miss Elena Puelles, Principal of the Normal School for Teachers, in order to carry out certain legal investigation relative to the acts stated in the respective

book of the institution in her charge, with reference to the expulsion of Miss Caritina Serros, a student of the second year, in the preparatory class, on account of the fact that it is said that said girl was wronged by the Franciscan Agustín Mújica y Trejo. After the usual formalities, and promising to state the truth, she declared: That about three months ago, she was called by Mr. Mújica y Trejo to the Church of San Francisco, on the northern part of the City, in order to inform her of some private matter. That she went and the information was that in the institution under her order, there was a girl by the name of Cristina Serros, who had been wronged in Sombrerete, and that on account of the good name of the institution, she, the Principal, should expel the girl. That the above mentioned person recommended her not to make public this information; but that she, the Principal, in the fulfillment of her duty, had made an investigation, the results of which she had submitted to the government under date of the 21st of July, 1916; that the above is all she could say; and she ratified the above after it was read to her, stating that she was a native of Guadalupe, with residence in this City, unmarried, 45 years old and employed. This ended the present act, which was signed, and with the statement that the General Secretary of the Government, Manuel García R., a lawyer, attended this meeting. I certify it. At the moment of signing this document—when she was asked relative to the fact that the Government had been informed that the First Clerk of the Secretary of the Government, Mr. Andrés L. Arteaga knew that she had stated that Mr. Mújica y Trejo was the wrongdoer; the Principal declared that this was not true, that she did not know about any such thing; that the only thing she knew she had stated; that if among the common people and in the last days, the rumor was current that he was the author of the crime, this in view of the great friendship between Mújica y Trejo and the wronged girl. Elena Puelles, Lieutenant-Colonel Chief of Arms, Alberto F. Berber; M. García, R.; Lieutenant Carrillo Dávila, Secretary. Signatures.”

IS THE CRIMINAL REPENTANT?

The Governor of the State, once in possession of sufficient data to demonstrate the culpability of the accused party, issued an order of arrest against Mújica, who was cap-

tured on the night of Saturday, the 22nd, inst., at his house, No. 32 of Santa Veracruz Street.

The culprit was locked in the barracks occupied by Batallion "Abraham González", from which place he would have been taken to the place where he was to expiate his crime, if a sparkle of honesty had not illumined his dark conscience a few minutes before the terrible sentence of the revolutionary justice had been made effective on him. Remorse, but more so than anything else, frightened at the proximity of death, he felt his strength fail and, demanding the pardon of the military officers who were to fulfil such sentence, he offered to atone for his delinquency.

With the consent of the chief of the Batallion, the sentenced man wrote to his victim requesting her to save him from the punishment which he merited. The following is his letter:

"July 22, 1916.—Miss Caritina Serros: I have had nothing to do except with you. We are denounced and I am to be shot at 3 in the morning to-day, if you do not consent to marry me. Please agree and save my life! I am ready to marry you. Once married we will go away. A. MÚJICA T.

P. S.—Come here and give your consent before Lieutenant Colonel Antonio Medina, who is the one to shoot me if you do not consent. Here at the gate of the barracks you should ask for the Lieutenant Colonel, of the Commandant of the Guard who is at the door; then the Lieutenant will come down, for he is up watching me. Give your consent before the Lieutenant Colonel and save me."

A TRAIT OF NOBILITY.

With the rapidity which the gravity of the case demanded, an officer of the above-mentioned batallion went to the house of Miss Serros, to deliver the letter of her traducer. Miss Serros, giving proof of a higher moral sense than that of the friar, and a better soul than the false preacher of Christian goodness, forgot the offense to her honor and, accompanied by her mother, went to see Mújica in his prison. Then, both addressed the following petitions to General Plank, who immediately granted them.

"Agustín Mújica y Trejo, of age, born in Guadalajara and living in this City in the Street of Santa Veracruz, No. 17, respectfully states: That I wish to be married to Miss

Caritina Serros in order to satisfy her outraged honor, and in view of the urgency of the case, I request that the usual legal tramitations be set aside in the knowledge that from this moment and expontaneously I renounce to the Catholic ministry which I have exerted. I beg to ask the Supreme Government to accede to my petition. I make the necessary declarations. Zacatecas, July 23rd, 1916.—A. Mújica y Trejo. To the General, Governor and Military Commandant of the State-City.”

“Caritina Serros, unmarried, fifteen years old, born in Sombrerete, living in this City on the Second Street of San Francisco, No. 23, respectfully states: That I wish to be married to Mr. Agustín Mújica y Trejo, and as my father is absent from the City, I request to be declared of age, on account of the urgency of the case. I beg that the Supreme Government grant my petition and state that the present petition is countersigned by my mother, who grants her consent. I make the necessary declarations. Zacatecas, July 23rd, 1916. Caritina Serros, Mercedes G. de Serros. To the General Governor and Military Commander of the State-City.”

THE REPARATION.

Once securing the favorable reply from the First Magistrate of the State, the necessary steps were taken in order to legalize the agreement, although delayed, of the culprit, and the officials of the Civil Register were notified and called to the barracks, where it met at about 2 in the morning. Before the witness ordered by law, and before numerous people, among whom was the Governor of the State, the marriage act was drawn up and duly signed, to comply with the requisites of justice.

This document reads as follows:

In Zacatecas, on the 23rd day of July, 1916, at 1:55 in the morning, before the Civil Judge Alfonso Montañés, appeared, expressing the wish to become married in accordance with the laws of the country, Agustín Mújica y Trejo, and Caritina Serros, both unmarried. The former is 32 years old, son of Gil Mújica and Ignacia Trejo, deceased, a native of Guadalajara; the latter is 15 years old, born in Sombrerete, residing here for the past two years, daughter

of Jacinto Serros, residing in Sombrerete, and of Merced González, residing here. And considering: that the publications for this marriage have been set aside by the Supreme Government of the State, as per a communication which reads: The document presented by Agustín Mújica y Trejo was answered as follows: In view of the reasons stated in your communication of this date, this Government has granted your petition to marry Miss Caritina Serros, with exemption of all tramitation. This I communicate to you for its due effects. There being no legal impediment, the woman petitioner was qualified to enter into marriage by the Supreme Government, as per communication of this date in the possession of this Registry; both contracting parties proved their freedom and unmarried state, and the Judge in charge of this Registry interrogated each of the parties, asking if it was their will to marry each other and both answered in the affirmative; therefore, the Judge, in the name of society, declared solemnly that the civil matrimonial contract was entered into by them. He then advised them in regard to the act, to which were present as witnesses Juan Ignacio Richart, Vicente Ríos and Ramón Villaseñor, unmarried, of age, living in this City, who together with the contracting parties heard the reading of this act, and agreed to its contents. Signed: A. Montañes, Caritina Serros, A. Mújica, T.; Juan I. Richart, R. R. Villaseñor, Vicente Ríos. Signatures. On the margin: No. 55. Matrimonial contract of Agustín Mújica y Trejo and Caritina Serros."

THE WORK OF THE REVOLUTION.

With the magnanimity peculiar to generous men, General Plank, who distinguishes himself by his sane radicalism and the rectitude of his criterion, pardoned the life of an execrable perturber of social tranquility, a criminal of baser instincts than those of the most depraved delinquent, and helped him to rehabilitate himself before honest men by contracting the sacred ties, when, to tell the truth, he deserved to be shot as an example to those who think that they still live in the remote centuries of the Popes.

With the ability of a judge who knows how to punish a criminal in accordance with the crime, with the inflexible severity of a mandatary in the faithful discharge of his duty, General Plank has decidedly given the first step in the mor-

alizing labor which this revolution will carry even to the bosom of the Mexican clergy, despite the irate protests of the unconscious ones, who call themselves defenders of liberty and can see things only from the darkened corner of their own stupidity. On the other hand, we are sure that this shameful event of the Church, will produce a scandal among the fanatics, the poor women, whom not even the prodigies of the aeroplane and the submarine of this wonderful century can shake from the ecstasy in which they are dreaming, believing they will secure entrance to heaven, losing precious hours which they could better employ taking care of their children and their homes.

CLERICALS.

Now, that the social tragedy which was to have ended in the pillory, ended in the Civil Registry, now that the light of truth opens its way through the curtains of hate which the fanaticism veils in order to separate governed and rulers, now that a stigma has fallen on one of those friars who renounce at the foot of the altar the pleasures of the world, but who have no scruples in perverting all incautious girls who are within their reach, with what words, with what arguments, oh! ministers of the Church, apostles of corruption and hypocrisy, are you going to continue preaching in the churches blackening the institutions of the Republic and jeering at the representatives of the law?

On our part, while we see that honest men, inspired by honest principles, occupy the high posts, we shall hear without any misgiving the loud voices of the preachers of all orders existing and to be, who clamor for a return of the Torquemada system and who call in vain against the conquests of liberty.

We are convinced that none of the servants of the Catholic Church preaches with the example, whether they note down in books the exemplary doings of Fray Genebro or they try to silence by means of the terrors of celestial punishment, the anguished voice of the candid victims sacrificed in the cross-roads of the confessional.

The Revolution has triumphed, gentlemen of the clericals!

Do not forget Agustín Mújica y Trejo, oh! daughters of Mary, worthy of a better fate in the arms of an honest husband!